



Volunteer at Everglades National Park



Make a Difference

Join the National Park Service Volunteer-In-Parks Program

“When volunteers agree to share their talents, skills and interests with the National Park Service, they are paying us one of the highest compliments possible by offering a most valued possession—their time.”

George B. Hartzog, Jr., former Director of the National Park Service
and creator of the Volunteers-in-Parks Program

Volunteer Overview



Everglades National Park has an active Volunteers-in-Parks program, also known as the “VIP” program, that is beneficial to both the National Park Service and park volunteers. Volunteers are given the opportunity to learn new skills, gain work experiences, meet new people, and participate in great adventures. In return, volunteers make valuable contributions towards the park’s mission to protect the natural and cultural resources and expand and enhance visitor services. Volunteer opportunities are available in a variety of career fields located throughout the park.



Individual Opportunities

Volunteers may be involved in leading interpretive tours, staffing an information desk, working on a trail crew, helping with maintenance of park facilities, supporting research, assisting with administrative tasks, and aiding with exotic plant management or habitat restoration.



Group Opportunities

Group activities typically involve removing exotic plants, trimming trails and vistas, working at the recycling center, and picking up trash. Groups may schedule a one-time event, volunteer for a week, or ‘adopt’ a project and volunteer on a regular basis.

Special Events ~ Volunteer activities are led by Park staff on a regular basis and may include a guided tour. Open to the public, they range from four to five hours. Individuals or groups needing community service hours are encouraged to contact the park volunteer coordinator for more information.



Requirements

Most anybody can volunteer for a national park. Some positions have estimated time commitments; others are open-ended or ongoing. Duties requiring access to park buildings and computers, or handling money may require a background investigation. Individuals participating in court-approved probation, non-U.S. citizens with legal permanent resident status, and even participants under 18, may volunteer. Other non-U.S. citizens, please visit the Office of International Affairs website for information, <http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/ivip/ivip.htm>, or contact the park Volunteer Coordinator.



How to Apply

Individuals interested in volunteering for one day to several months should visit our website to download an application and view current opportunities. Organized groups; corporate, community, youth groups seeking volunteer opportunities should contact the park volunteer coordinator directly to arrange an activity, or visit our website to join a previously scheduled event.



Benefits

Volunteering expands awareness, understanding, sensitivity, and appreciation of the natural and cultural resources of the Everglades. Volunteers are challenged, feel a sense of satisfaction, and improve their physical health through volunteer activities. All volunteers are invited to an annual appreciation event held in March. Awards may be given for time contributions and special accomplishments. All volunteers receive on-site training and are protected by Workers' Compensation Programs for tort claims and injury compensation. Some expenses incurred as a result of volunteer activities may be reimbursed.



Park Overview

Everglades National Park, encompassing 1.5 million acres, was founded in 1947. It was the first park of its kind to be created due to its rich biodiversity and for the preservation of a complex and fragile ecosystem. The park is designated an International Biosphere Reserve, a World Heritage Site, and a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance.

“Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t even have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace.”
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The Everglades is a test. If we pass it, we get to keep the planet,” said Joe Podgor, former Director of Friends of the Everglades. **You can be an answer to that test. Volunteer today!**

Everglades National Park, VIP Coordinator
40001 SR9336, Homestead, FL 33034, 305.242.7752
www.nps.gov/ever/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm